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Letter No. 2174

July 26, 1984

WHEAT EXPORT  
FORECAST UP

Stronger demand for U.S. wheat, especially from the Soviet Union which is now expected to import a total of 23.0 million tons from all sources, has caused an upward revision in the 1984/85 wheat export forecast to 38.1 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 1984/85 corn export forecast was revised downward by 1.3 million tons to 50.2 million due to expected weaker demand in Spain, S. Africa and the European Community.

WHEAT FARM  
PRICE OUTLOOK

Wheat farm prices will most likely be shaped by the buying pattern of major overseas customers and the use of the loan as a producer marketing option, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture economist Allen Schienbein. Harvest time prices are below the loan rate in most areas, indicating 1984/85's national average farm price may be between \$3.25 and \$3.50 a bushel. Since prices through this fall will be below the \$4.38 target price, eligible producers may receive deficiency payments of more than \$1 a bushel. The expectations that 1985's wheat prices may be considerably below the target price should once again encourage strong program participation in 1985. (Schienbein's phone number is 202-447-8444.)

COARSE GRAIN  
EXPORTS FROM EC

The European Community is projected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to become a net exporter of coarse grains in 1984/85. Imports of coarse grains by the EC in 1984/85 are expected to continue their long-term decline, down from almost 25 million tons in 1976/77 to a forecast level of 4 million tons. U.S. exports are directly affected by this decline since the U.S. has historically provided 85-90 percent of total EC corn imports.

WHAT  
FARMERS  
PUT-IN

With much of the former PIK acreage returned to production, farmers' use of energy, agricultural chemicals, seed, machinery and equipment, and other manufactured inputs is up this year compared with 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As of early June, field crop acreage was estimated at 284 million, almost 30 million acres more than 1983 plantings. However, a late, wet spring, continued high interest rates, and a record farm debt asset ratio have kept fertilizer, pesticide, and farm machinery purchases lower than previously forecast for the 1984 crop year. Farmers now are expected to spend just under \$41 billion on manufactured inputs in 1984, compared with 37.2 billion in 1983. (For more information, call Katherine Reichelderter at 202-447-4196.)

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WORLD WHEAT -  
1984 CROP

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, crop prospects indicate that 1984's world wheat production may exceed 1983's record 489 million metric tons. Output of major exporters may be down slightly, with projected lower harvests in Australia, Argentina, and Canada...offsetting larger crops in the European Community and the U.S. Because world trade in 1984/85 may be only fractionally below last season's, plentiful supplies in the major exporting nations will keep sales competition intense. (For more information, call Allen Schienbein at 202-447-8444.)

U.S. WHEAT -  
1984/85

The 1984/85 U.S. wheat marketing year will once again be shaped by a large crop, near-record supplies, high feed use, modestly declining exports, and continued low prices, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Participation in the 1984 USDA acreage adjustment programs is pegged at 61 pct. of base acreage, compared with 76 pct. in 1983. Nearly 21 million acres of wheat cropland will be left idle in 1984 because of program participation, 8 million larger than 1983's, and the forecasted July 1984 wheat crop of 2.52 billion bushels replaces the 1983 crop as the third largest on record. (For more information, call Allen Schienbein at 202-447-8444.)

WHAT THE  
RAIN DID

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting special surveys in Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and S. Dakota to determine how many crop acres were abandoned or replanted to other crops as a result of excessive spring rains and flooding.

CATTLE & CALVES  
INVENTORY DOWN

All cattle and calves on hand in the U.S. on July 1, 1984, are estimated at 122 million head, down 1 pct. from July 1 a year ago, and 2 pct. below July 1, 1982, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cows and heifers that have calved, at 49 million, are down 1 pct. from 1983 and 2 pct. below July 1 two years ago. Beef cows, 38.1 million, down 1 pct. from 1983, and 2 pct. below July 1 two years ago. Milk cows, 10.9 million, down 2 pct. from both years. (For more info., call 202/447-6880.)

RED MEAT  
PRODUCTION

Commercial red meat production for the U.S. in June 1984 totaled 3.20 billion pounds, down 3 pct. from June 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jan.-June red meat production, at 19.4 billion pounds, is up 3 pct. from last year. The 1984 accumulated production percent changes by individual components were: beef, up 4 pct.; veal, up 13 pct.; pork, up 2 pct.; lamb and mutton, up 5 pct. (For more information, call 202-447-6880.)

A NO IS  
A NO!

Effective July 23, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is expressly prohibiting reentry into the U.S. of imported meat and poultry products that have been refused entry by USDA inspectors. Investigations show that some products refused entry were exported within the 45-day time limit, held in a warehouse in a foreign country, and eventually reshipped to the U.S. using a U.S. Customs Service procedure designed only for products transported through the U.S. but intended for export from this country. This new proposal will end that practice. For written comments, write by Sept. 21 to FSIS hearing clerk, Room 2637-South, USDA, Wash., D.C. 20250. The proposal docket no. is 83-0401.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE "Soviet Grain Purchases - I"...The 1984/85 Soviet grain outlook has undergone several changes in the past month. USDA economist Jim Cole highlights some of these changes and what they mean. Jim Johnson interviews. (171)

"Soviet Grain Purchases - II"...USDA economist Jim Cole continues his discussion on Soviet grain production, including the U.S. long-term grain agreement, and current outlook for U.S. sales of grain to the Soviet Union. Jim Johnson interviews. (172)

"Farmland Values"...U.S. farmland values have declined for the fourth consecutive year. USDA economist Bill Heneberry focuses on this decline and factors contributing to it. Scott Erickson interviews. (173)

"Fruit Outlook"...The current forecast for supplies of fresh fruit indicate larger crops than last year, which may slow the pace of price gains. USDA economist Ben Huang comments on factors contributing to this situation. Victor Powell interviews. (174)

"Inspecting Grain"...Warm weather conditions across the country increase the importance of careful and frequent inspection of farm-stored grain. Chris Niedermayer with USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, talks about procedures for inspecting grain. Jim Johnson interviews. (175)

CATFISH DOWN The domestic production of farm-raised catfish during June totaled 10.7 million pounds round weight, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That's a decrease of 11 pct. from June 1983. The June average price paid to growers was 74 cents per pound, 9 cents above June last year. The June average prices received by processors for whole fish were \$1.62 per pound for ice pack and \$1.66 for frozen fish. (For more information, call 202-447-2123.)

ORANGE GROWERS REFERENDA The U.S. Department of Agriculture is reminding California-Arizona navel and Valencia orange growers they will soon receive referenda ballots for voting on the marketing orders as proposed to be amended. The ballots were mailed around June 25. Complete details and instructions accompany the ballots, plus a complete summary of the proposed amendments. The voting period is Aug. 1 - 31. Any navel or Valencia orange grower who does not receive a ballot by Aug. 10 should contact: Roland Harris, L.A. Marketing Field Office, 845 S. Figueroa St., Suite 540, L.A., Calif. 90017. Phone: 213/688-3190.

WOOL & MOHAIR SUPPORT PRICES Support prices for wool and mohair for 1984 marketings are \$1.68 per pound for shorn wool and \$5.169 per pound for mohair, according to Sec'y of Agriculture John R. Block. Mohair is being supported at the same percent of parity as wool. Pulled wool will continue to be supported at a level comparable to the support price for shorn wool through payments on unshorn lambs. Mohair payments will be calculated in a manner similar to wool.

OILSEEDS World rapeseed production in 1984/85 is forecast at a record 15.9 million tons, 1.4 million above last season's outturn, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Expanded plantings in Canada and Poland, combined with expected improved yields in the United Kingdom, are the major reasons for the larger production forecast.



OFF MIKE

Gary Wulf is the new farm director at KFRM, Salina, KS. He replaces Howard Tice. Gary was at WIMA, Lima, OH ... Roddy Peeples (VSA Net, San Angelo, TX) has been named "Man of the Year in Texas Agriculture" for 1984 by the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association. He's one of seven to receive the honor, and he'll receive the award at the annual TCAAA meeting Aug. 5-8. Our congratulations! ... "The biggest ever attendance in the 50 years of the station's existence." That's how Ken Copeland, Auburn Univ. info specialist, described the crowd of 3,000 farmers who attended a July 10th No-Till Systems Conference at the University's Headlands research facility. The credit, he told WBAM manager Bobby Brennan in a letter, should go to Paul Simpkins, WBAM's farm director. Paul not only pre-publicized the event but also conducted his 6 a.m. and 12:00 noon farm shows from the event ... All broadcasters are writers (or should be) even though they present their information vocally. Once in a while a broadcaster uses his writing skills for more than radio use. Latest example came in the form of two copies of the BUSINESS FARMER, an agricultural newspaper in Scottsbluff, NE. Both contained editorial columns by Jack McConnell (KOLT, Scottsbluff, NE). Actually they are a mix of down-home chit chat and editorial comments. In a phone conversation with Jack about his efforts, we also talked about the weather, etc. Seems the grasshoppers are a problem this year. His comment: "We've got grasshoppers big enough to put sandals on." ... Gary Truitt (Brownfield Network, Centertown, MO) is a proud new papa. Wife Kathy presented him with daughter Anne Elizabeth, July 7, and both are doing well ... Wayne Rothgeb (WKJG-TV, Fort Wayne, IN) reports their annual Chicken Flying Contest is now history. He reports, "Since Dave Russell of WOWO was on vacation, Dugan Fry brought over their 'Heneretta.' She flew good. Lew Middleton of WQHK brought over the 'Hawk.' It flew good. But my 'Rockette,' a son of my rooster 'Rocky,' did them both in by flying 31 feet." Let's all hear it for Rockette ... Final note, check the new one-word-less title below. We're happy not to be an "actor" any longer.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1417...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) The dairy industry is one sector of agriculture which is both a success and a problem. On this edition of Agriculture USA Dave Carter, George Holmes, and Lynn Wyvill talk with dairy experts about the success of America's dairy farmers and the problem of dairy surplus products.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1406...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; CCC grain sales to Africa; Farm exports to Brazil; Soil erosion and crop production; Cryogenics can save money.

CONSUMER TIME #899...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Bush pilot; Microwave cooking containers; A new safe food book from USDA; Counting cholesterol; Earthquakes: What to do?

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, Aug. 1, Livestock and poultry report; Thurs, Aug. 2, Agricultural outlook; Tues, Aug. 7, Vegetable report; Wed, Aug. 8, Horticultural products review. Dial the USDA National News lines 202/488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 P.M. EDT each working day.

  
JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief  
Radio and Television Division